

# COVID-19 Testing in Pre K-12 Schools

## The Rhode Island Department of Health recommends COVID-19 testing for students in Pre K-12 schools.

- Students can have COVID-19 without any symptoms but can still spread the infection to other students.
- Testing in Pre K-12 schools can identify students who are infected and need to isolate at home to protect other students from getting COVID-19.

## In-school testing is fast and easy.

- COVID-19 tests in schools are done with nasal swabs. Nasal swabs are gentle and not painful.
- Students in middle school and high school can swab themselves if they want to.

## Sign your child up for testing if COVID-19 tests are offered at their school.

- Contact your child's school or district to find out if COVID-19 testing is available. If testing is available, you can complete a consent form to allow your child to participate in testing. Students 16 and older do not need a signed consent form to get tested at school.
- COVID-19 testing at schools is free. There is no cost to participate in COVID-19 testing at school and you do not need to have insurance.

Learn more about the COVID-19 tests used in Pre K-12 schools. Contact your child's school or district to find out what kind of testing is available.

### RAPID TESTING



Some schools use the rapid antigen tests. Antigen tests perform best in symptomatic people and within a certain number of days since symptom onset. This type of test is processed at the school, so positive cases are found as soon as possible. If you receive a rapid antigen test, you may need to get a lab-processed test to [confirm your results](#).

### PCR TESTING



The PCR test is sent to a lab to process. Results are usually ready in one or two days. PCR testing is available in some schools and at all [State-run test sites](#).

### POOLED TESTING



Pooled testing is a fast and easy way to regularly test large groups of asymptomatic people. Each person in the pool gets swabbed twice. One swab from each person is mixed together to create a pooled sample. The pooled sample is then tested in a lab. If the entire pool tests positive, then each person's second swab is tested to see which individuals tested positive.